

## FIRST LIGHT ON A LONG-FORGOTTEN CIVILISATION: NEW DISCOVERIES OF AN UNKNOWN PREHISTORIC PAST IN INDIA.

By SIR JOHN MARSHALL, Kt., C.I.E., Litt. D., Director-General of Archaeology in India.

NOT often has it been given to archaeologists, as it was given to Schliemann at Tiryns and Mycenæ, or to Stein in the deserts of Turkestan, to light upon the remains of a long-forgotten civilisation. It looks, however, at this moment, as if we were on the threshold of such a discovery in the plains of the Indus.

Up to the present our knowledge of Indian antiquities has carried us back hardly further than the third century before Christ. Of the long ages before the coming of the Greeks and the rise of the Maurya dynasty; of the birth and growth of civilisation in the great river basins; of the cultural development of the races who one after another poured into the peninsula from the north and west—of these and other problems relating to that dim and remote past, archaeology has given us but the faintest glimmers; for almost the only remains of those early times that have come down to us have been rough implements of the Stone and Copper Ages, groups of prehistoric graves in the south of the peninsula, and some rude cyclopean walls at Rajagrha in Bihar. On the other hand, from the third century B.C. onwards, we have, on the whole, a fairly clear idea of man's handiwork in general: of his religious and domestic architecture, of his formative arts, of his weapons and utensils, of his personal ornaments and his jewellery, his coins and gems, and of the scripts which he used in his writing. And whenever it happens that new antiquities come to light—no matter to what race or religion they may belong—it is invariably possible to assign them with confidence and within relatively narrow limits to their respective age or class.

Now, however, there has unexpectedly been unearthed, in the south of the Panjab and in Sind, an entirely new class of objects which have nothing in common with those previously known to us, and which are unaccompanied by any data that might have helped to establish their age and origin.

The two sites where these somewhat startling remains have been discovered are some 400 miles apart—the one being at Harappa in the Montgomery District of the Panjab; the other at Mohenjo-Daro, in the Larkana District of Sind. At both these places there is a vast expanse of artificial mounds, evidently covering the remains of once flourishing cities, which, to judge from the mass of accumulated débris, rising as high as 60 ft. above the level of the plain, must have been in existence for many hundreds of years. Such groups of mounds abound in the plains of the Indus, just as they do in Mesopotamia and the valley of the Nile; and they are specially conspicuous along the banks of the old, dried-up beds of the main stream and its tributaries, not only in Sind, but in Bahawalpur State and in the Panjab.

The opportunities for excavation, therefore, in this part of India may be regarded as almost limitless; and, when it can be carried out on thorough and systematic lines, there is no doubt that the field will prove a peculiarly fertile one. Up to date, however, the meagre resources at the disposal of the Archaeological Department have permitted it to undertake little more than preliminary trial-digging on these two sites: and it goes without saying that the remains disclosed are correspondingly limited. Yet, such as they are, they are full of promise.

At Mohenjo-Daro, the main street of the old city can still be discerned as a broad highway running from the south bank of the river towards the south-east, with houses fringing it on either side. What is surmised by the discoverer, Mr. Banerji, to have been the royal palace, stood at the point where this road emerged on to the quays of the river side. Opposite to it, in the now dry bed of the river, are several islands from which rose the principal shrines of the city, the highest and, no doubt, the chief of them all, being a massive Buddhist *stupa* raised on a high oblong platform, and surrounded by subsidiary shrines and monastic quarters. These remains belong to about the second century A.D., when the Kushans were paramount in the north-west of India; and, judging by the finds already made—particularly the urn burials, remnants of painted frescoes

inscribed in Brahmi and Kharoshthi characters, new types of coins and other novel objects—there can be no doubt that their further exploration will result in welcome light being thrown on this very obscure period of Indian history.

Valuable, however, as these remains are likely to prove, it is not in them that the real interest of Mohenjo-Daro centres at the moment. Deep down below the Buddhist monuments described above, or at other parts of the site appearing close to the surface itself, there are at least two other strata of buildings belonging to much earlier epochs, and containing a variety of brick structures—the character and antiquity of which can at present only be surmised. Among these older structures one group is especially worthy of mention. Besides various halls and passages and chambers, it includes a massive structure—apparently a shrine—with walls seven or eight feet thick, pierced by several conduits which, in the opinion of the excavator, served for carrying

cottas; toys; bangles of blue glass, paste and shell; new types of coins or tokens; knives and cores of chert; dice and chessmen; a remarkable series of stone rings; and, most important of all, a number of engraved and inscribed seals. Iron does not occur at all, except in the latest deposits, and metal objects of any kind are scarce, particularly at Harappa.

Of all these antiquities the most valuable are the stone seals, not only because they are inscribed with legends in an unknown pictographic script, but because the figures engraved on them, and the style of the engraving, are different from anything of the kind hitherto met with in Indian art. Some of them are of steatite, others of ivory, and others of stone and paste. In shape most are square, and provided at the back with a boss pierced with a small hole for suspension. The animals engraved on them are in some instances bulls; in others, unicorns; but it is to be observed that neither the Indian humped bull nor the water-buffalo occurs among them.

As to the strange pictographs which do duty for letters, three points are worthy of remark: first, that the marks (apparently vowel signs) attached to many of the pictographs indicate a relatively high stage of development; secondly, that some of the inscriptions from Mohenjo-Daro betray a later stage in the evolution of this script than those from Harappa; thirdly, that they bear no resemblance whatever to any ancient Indian alphabet known to us; but, on the other hand, they do bear a certain general affinity to pictographs of the Mycenaean age in the Mediterranean area, though it is not possible to point to any of the symbols as being actually identical.

Examples of this pictographic writing are found not only on the seal dies, but also (at Mohenjo-Daro) on certain oblong bars of copper which their discoverer assumes to have been coins, since they are similar in shape to the early Indian oblong coins, known as "punch-marked," though they do not correspond in weight with any recognised standards used in ancient India. Should this assumption of Mr. Banerji's prove correct, it would mean that these coins may turn out to be the earliest in existence, since the first coins hitherto known to have been struck in any other country are the Lydian pieces of the seventh century B.C.

Notwithstanding that the curious ring stones mentioned above have been found in large numbers on both sites, the purpose to which they were put has hitherto quite baffled the ingenuity of the excavators; though, for reasons into which it would take too long to enter here, Mr. Banerji believes that they were in some way connected with

the *Bhartaris*, or shrines of eternal fire. They are of all sizes, from that of a small napkin ring up to fifty pounds in weight, and are made of various coloured stones or marble; but what is particularly curious about them is that in many specimens the upper and lower surfaces are undulating.

Another remarkable and significant feature at the Mohenjo-Daro site is the character of the burial customs. In the earliest period the practice was to bury the body in a hunched position in a brick tomb, generally of square or oblong form. Later on (it may be very much later), the custom obtained of burning the body, as is commonly done in India to-day, and depositing the ashes in a small urn, which, along with two or three others, was placed inside a larger round jar, accompanied by several miniature vessels containing food, raiment, and so on.

To what age and to what people do these novel antiquities belong? Those are the two questions which will naturally occur to the reader, and to which a score of different answers may perhaps suggest themselves. As to the first question, all that can be said at present is that the period during which this culture flourished in the Indus valley must have extended over many centuries, and that it came to an end before the rise of the Maurya power in the third century B.C. So much may be inferred, on the one hand, from the many successive strata of habitation, particularly on the Harappa site; on the other, from the presence of copper weapons, and

*Continued on page 529.*



UNEARTHED DEEP DOWN BELOW THE BUDDHIST MONUMENTS OF THE SECOND CENTURY AT MOHENJO-DARO: MUCH EARLIER REMAINS—A STAIRCASE OUTSIDE A SHRINE, WITH A CONDUIT COVERED BY MARBLE SLABS (IN THE FOREGROUND).

Photograph by the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle. By Courtesy of Sir John Marshall.

off the lustral water when the shrine or image within it was washed. In another part of the same group is what appears to be an altar built of small glazed bricks, and provided with a drain of similar brick-work. Some idea of the appearance of these early buildings, and of their present state of preservation, is afforded by two of the photographs reproduced, the one (on this page) showing a staircase to the south-west of the shrine referred to, with a conduit in the foreground from which the covering of marble slabs has been removed; the other (on page 529), illustrating the glazed-brick flooring in a bay on the western façade of the same shrine.

At Harappa, Mr. Daya Ram Sahni's excavations disclosed as many as seven or eight successive levels, demonstrating the long and continuous occupation of the site during many hundreds of years prior to the third century B.C.; and throughout most, if not all, of this long period, burnt brick of a good quality was used for building purposes. The site at Harappa, however, has suffered much from the depredations of railway contractors and others, and the structures brought to light are in a more fragmentary condition than at Mohenjo-Daro. On the other hand, the smaller antiquities are generally identical in character with those from Mohenjo-Daro, and some of them even are better preserved. These smaller antiquities from the two sites comprise new varieties of potteries both painted and plain, some fashioned by hand and some turned on the wheel; terra-

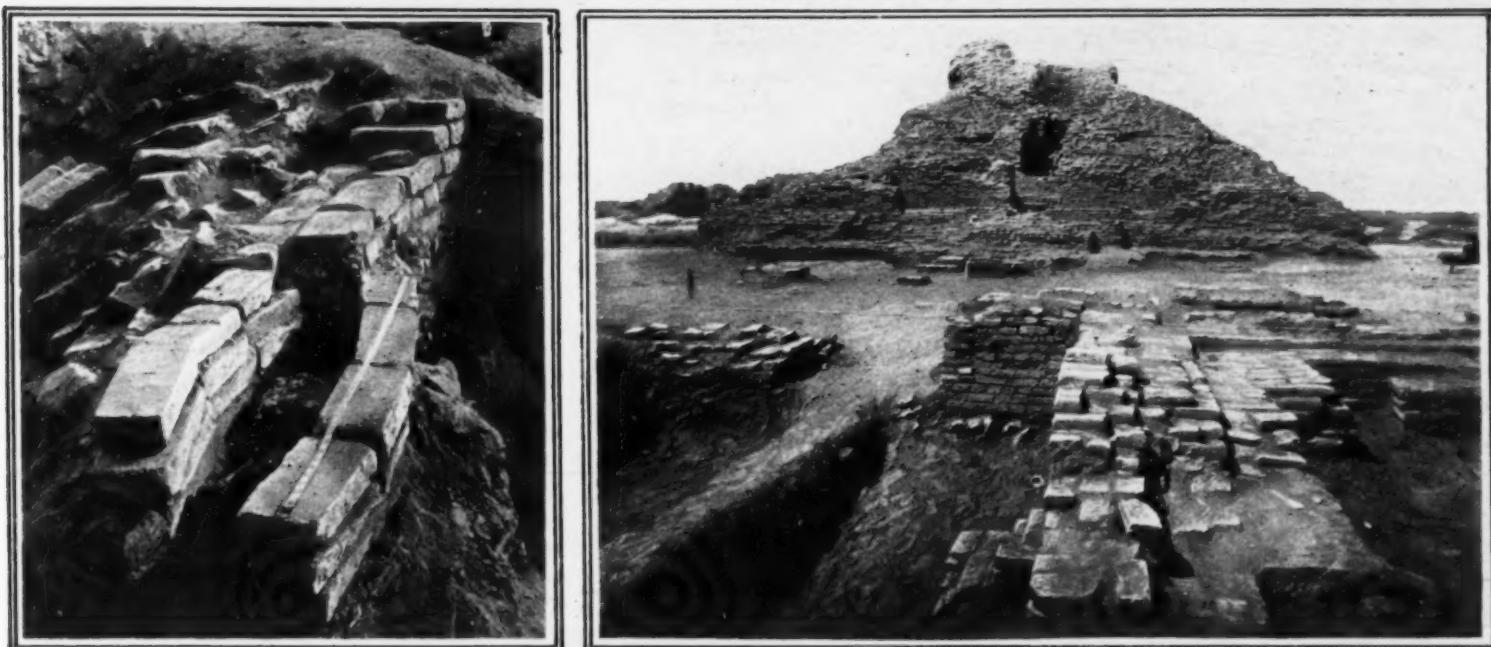
## AN INDIAN "TIRYNS" AND "MYCENÆ": A FORGOTTEN AGE REVEALED.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA, WESTERN CIRCLE. BY COURTESY OF SIR JOHN MARSHALL, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN INDIA.



ONE OF THE TWO SITES WHOSE REMAINS ARE OLDER THAN ANYTHING YET KNOWN IN INDIA: PREHISTORIC BUILDINGS EXCAVATED AT MOHENJO-DARO, SIND, DATING PROBABLY BETWEEN 1000 AND 400 B.C.

WITH FLOORING AND CONDUIT OF GLAZED BRICK: A PREHISTORIC SHRINE AT MOHENJO-DARO.



TO HOLD A HUNKED BODY: A 3-FT. LONG BRICK GRAVE BUILT IN THE WALL OF A ROOM AT MOHENJO-DARO.

BUILT MORE THAN 2000 YEARS AGO, BUT COVERING TWO STRATA OF EARLIER REMAINS: THE SECOND-CENTURY BUDDHIST STUPA AT MOHENJO-DARO, ON AN ISLAND IN THE DRY RIVER-BED.



SHOWING A POT (IN FOREGROUND) THAT CONTAINED EARLY INDIAN OBLONG "PUNCH-MARKED" COINS (KARSHAPANAS): MASSIVE BRICK WALLS OF THE SECOND AND THIRD PERIODS AT MOHENJO-DARO.

The remarkable discoveries here illustrated put back by several centuries the date of the earliest known remains of Indian civilisation. In his deeply interesting article describing them (on page 528) Sir John Marshall compares them to the work of Schliemann at Tiryns and Mycenæ, where likewise it fell to the archaeologist to break new ground and reveal the relics of a long-forgotten past. "It looks at this moment," writes Sir John, "as if we were on the threshold of such a discovery in the plains of the Indus. Up to the present our knowledge of Indian antiquities has carried us back hardly further than the third century before Christ. . . . The two sites where these somewhat startling remains have been

ON THE OTHER NEWLY DISCOVERED PREHISTORIC SITE IN INDIA, OCCUPIED FOR MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE THE THIRD CENTURY B.C.: EXCAVATIONS AT HARAPPA, IN THE PANJAB.

discovered are some 400 miles apart—the one being at Harappa in the Montgomery District of the Panjab, the other at Mohenjo-Daro in the Larkana District of Sind. At both these places there is a vast expanse of artificial mounds evidently covering the remains of once-flourishing cities, which . . . must have been in existence for many hundreds of years." The excavations at Mohenjo-Daro were made by Mr. Banerji. "At Harappa, Mr. Daya Ram Sahni's excavations disclosed as many as seven or eight successive levels, demonstrating the long and continuous occupation of the site during many hundreds of years prior to the third century B.C."

## "MODERN" REFINEMENTS IN ANCIENT INDIA: ARTS AND

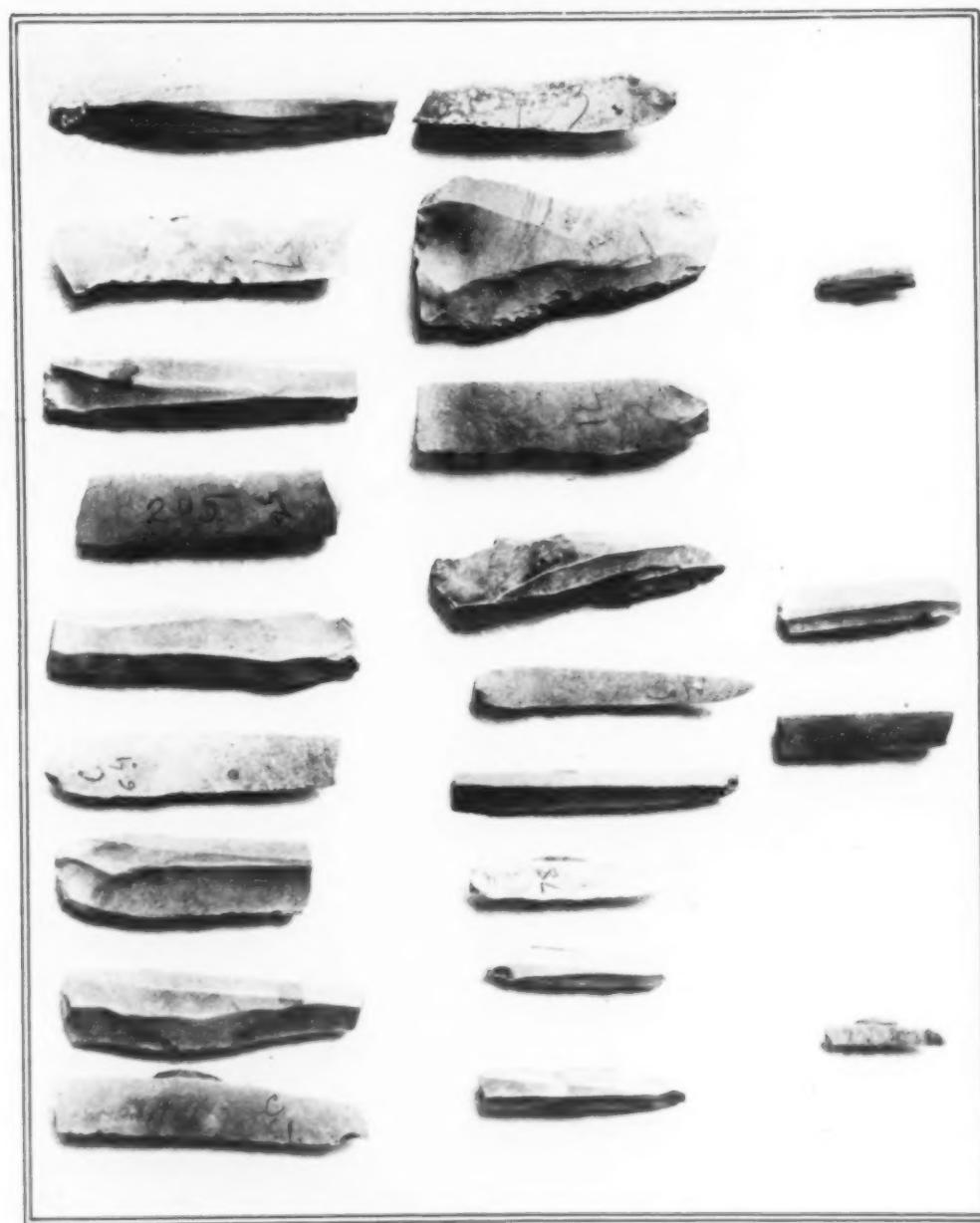
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA, WESTERN CIRCLE. BY



WITH HEADDRESSES RECALLING THE MEDIEVAL FASHIONS IN EUROPE: PREHISTORIC INDIAN TERRACOTTA FIGURINES FROM HARAPPA (SIMILAR TO SOME FOUND AT PATNA, IN BIHAR).



BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN CONNECTED WITH "SHRINES OF ETERNAL FIRE": MYSTERIOUS RING-STONES (FREQUENT ON BOTH THE NEW PREHISTORIC SITES).



IMPLEMENT USED BY A PREHISTORIC INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE REMAINS OF WHOSE BUILDINGS THERE IS NO TRACE OF IRON: FLAKES AND KNIVES OF CHERT FOUND DURING THE EXCAVATIONS OF THE EARLIER BUILDINGS AT MOHENJO-DARO.



TAPERING AT THE BASE: A PREHISTORIC EARTHEN STORE JAR FROM HARAPPA (WITH A TWO-FOOT RULE BESIDE IT).



A MODERN REFINEMENT OF LUXURY USED BY A PREHISTORIC PEOPLE IN INDIA: A HORIZONTAL JAR (ABOUT 6½ IN. HIGH) DESCRIBED AS A WINE OR WATER COOLER.

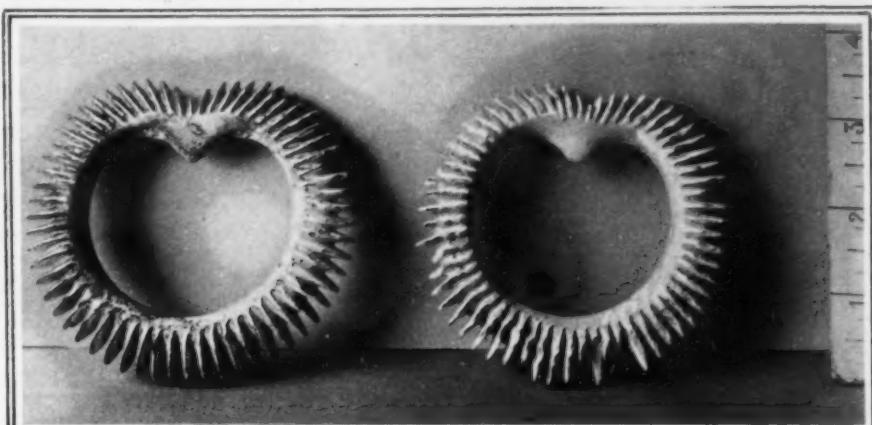
There is a remarkably modern touch about many of these objects found on the two newly discovered prehistoric sites in the Indus Valley, at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, described by Sir John Marshall in his article on page 528 of this number. The discoveries, as he points out, have brought to light evidences of a hitherto unknown period of primitive Indian culture, including a form of picture-writing quite new to archaeology. "The smaller antiquities from the two sites," says Sir John, "comprise new varieties of potteries both painted and plain, some fashioned by hand, and some turned on the wheel, terra-cottas, toys, bangles, of blue glass, paste and shell, new types of coins or tokens, knives, and cores of chert, dice and chessmen, a remarkable series of stone rings, and, most important of all, a number of engraved and inscribed seals (illustrated on page 532). Iron does not occur at all, except in the latest deposits, and metal objects of any kind are scarce, particularly at Harappa. . . . Notwithstanding that the curious ring stones mentioned above have been found in large numbers on both sites, the purpose to which they were put has hitherto quite baffled the ingenuity of the excavators, though Mr. Banerji believes that they

## CRAFTS OF A NEWLY DISCOVERED PREHISTORIC RACE.

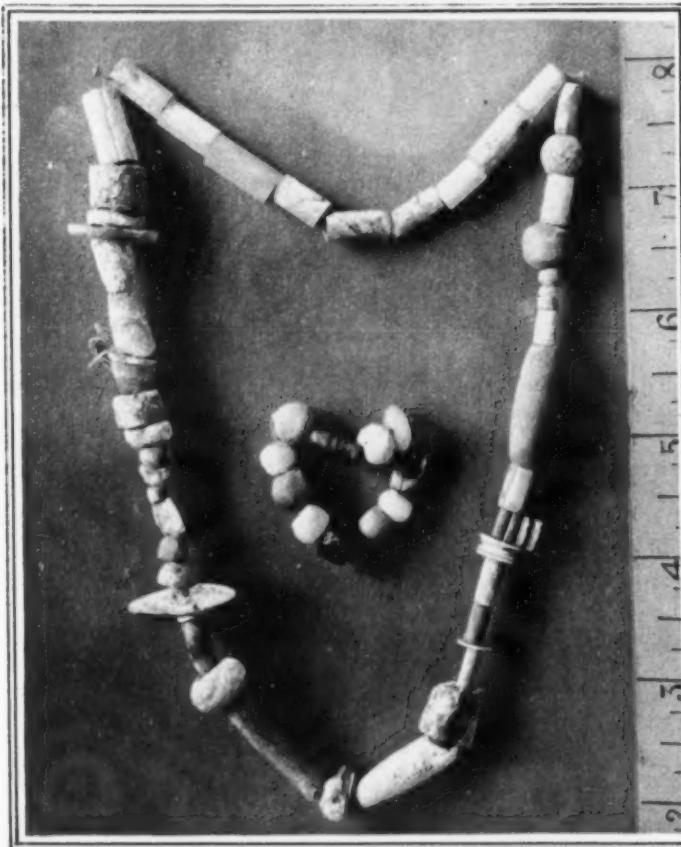
COURTESY OF SIR JOHN MARSHALL, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN INDIA.



FROM BALUCHISTAN, THROUGH WHICH THE DRAVIDIAN RACES PROBABLY ENTERED INDIA: PREHISTORIC PAINTED POTTERY SIMILAR TO THE NEW DISCOVERIES.



POSSIBLY WORN ON THE WRISTS OF PREHISTORIC INDIAN BEAUTIES SOME 3000 YEARS AGO: BANGLES (ABOUT 3½ IN. ACROSS) OF BLUE GLASS PASTE, FOUND AT HARAPPA.



TRINKETS WORN BY PREHISTORIC INDIAN PEOPLE: MISCELLANEOUS BEADS OF CORNELIAN, SHELL, AND SO ON, FROM MOHENJO-DARO.



USED IN PREHISTORIC URN-BURIAL TO HOLD FOOD OR RAIMENT AND PLACED WITH THE URN INSIDE A LARGER JAR: MINIATURE FUNERAL POTTERY (1 TO 1½ IN. HIGH) FROM MOHENJO-DARO.



INDICATING A HIGH DEGREE OF DECORATIVE ART IN THE PREHISTORIC PERIOD AT MOHENJO-DARO: THREE FRAGMENTS OF POLYCHROME POTTERY WITH DESIGNS OF VARIOUS PATTERNS.



BEAUTIFULLY SHAPED AND PROPORTIONED: A COMPLETE PAINTED VASE (ABOUT 6 IN. HIGH) OF THE PREHISTORIC PERIOD FOUND DURING THE EXCAVATIONS AT HARAPPA.

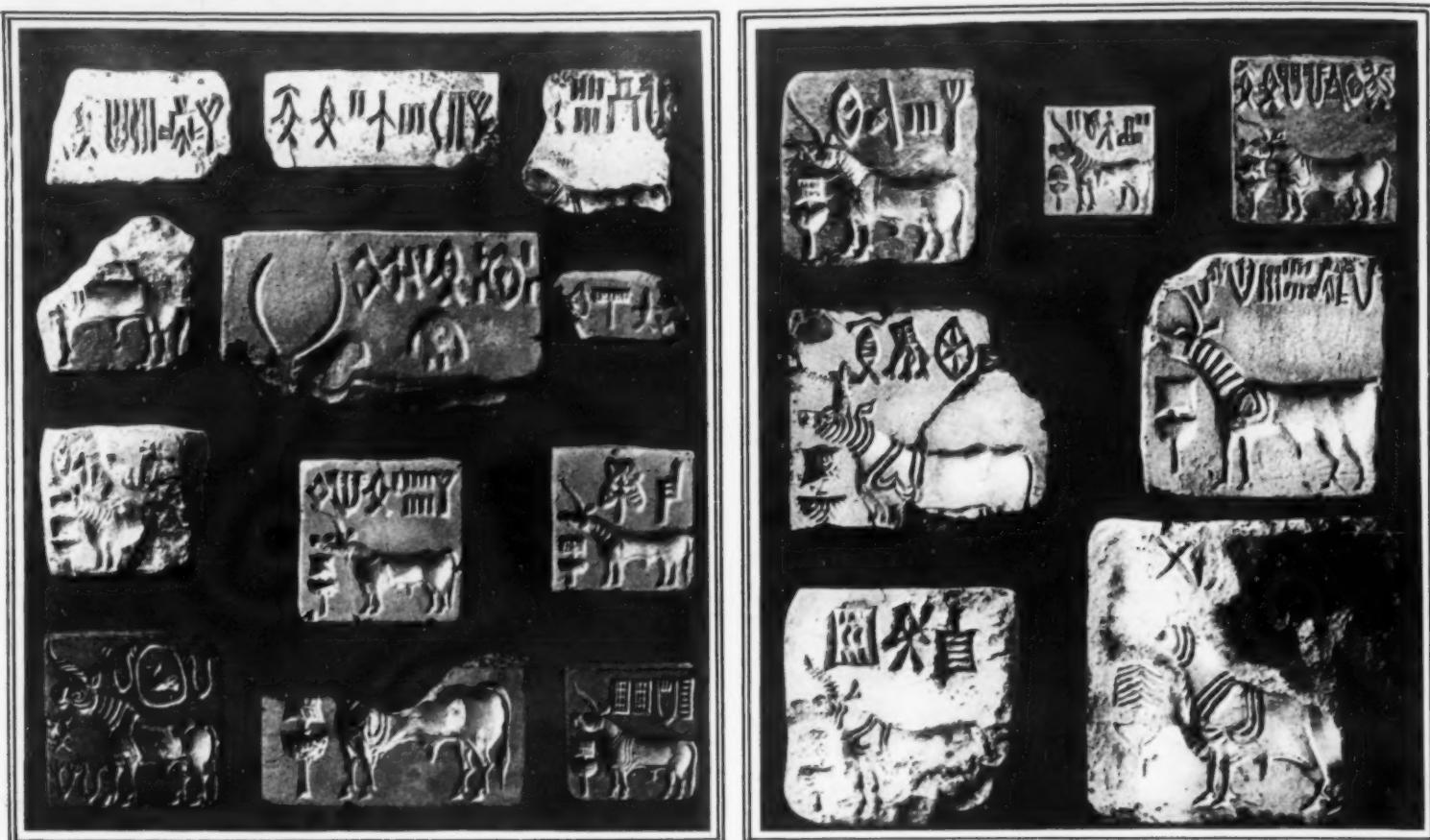


INDICATING AN ANALOGY BETWEEN THE PREHISTORIC ART OF THE INDUS VALLEY AND THAT OF BALUCHISTAN: POLYCHROME POTTERY FROM THE LATTER COUNTRY (LOWER ROW) COMPARED WITH EXAMPLES FROM MOHENJO-DARO (TOP ROW).

were in some way connected with the *Bhartaris*, or shrines of eternal fire. They are of all sizes, from that of a small napkin ring up to 50 lb. in weight, and are made of various coloured stones or marble; but what is particularly curious about them is that in many specimens, the upper and lower surfaces are undulating. Another remarkable and significant feature at the Mohenjo-Daro site is the character of the burial customs. In the earliest period the practice was to bury the body in a hunched position in a brick tomb (see page 529). Later on the custom obtained of burning the body, as is commonly done in India to-day, and depositing the ashes in a small urn which, along with two or three others, was placed inside a larger round jar, accompanied by several miniature vessels containing food or raiment." It is an interesting problem who these prehistoric people were, and whence they came. "Painted pottery and other objects somewhat analogous to those from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa have been found in Baluchistan, and there are linguistic reasons for believing that it was by way of Baluchistan that the Dravidian races (thought by some writers to have been originally connected with the Mediterranean) entered India."

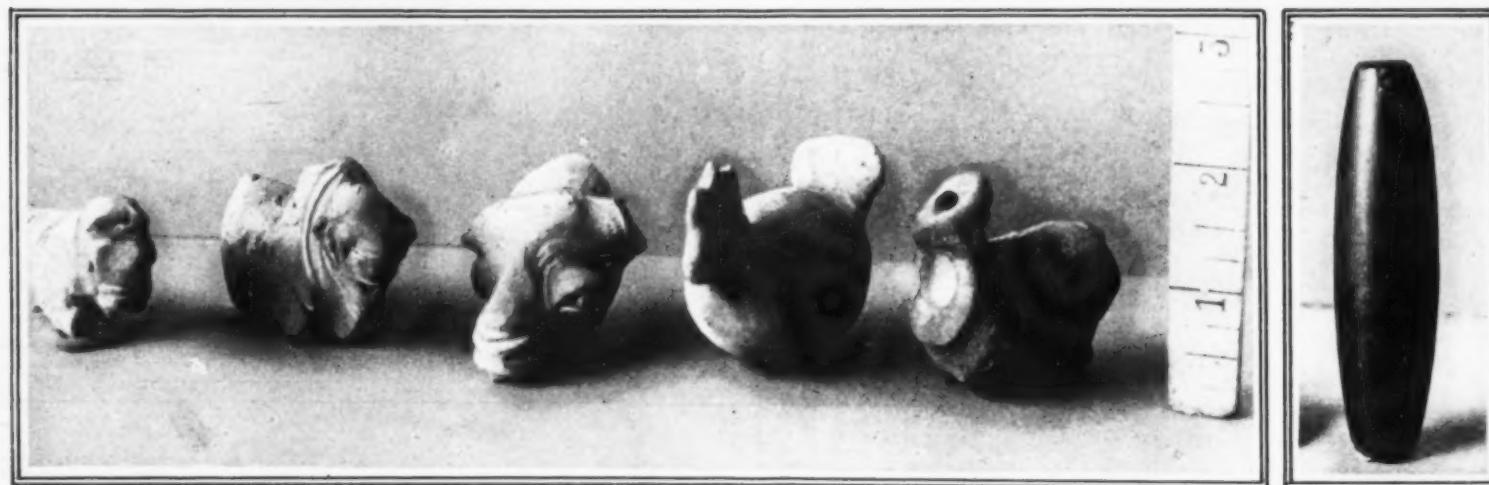
## UNKNOWN INDIAN PICTURE-WRITING: A NEW PROBLEM IN PALÆOGRAPHY.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA, WESTERN CIRCLE. BY COURTESY OF SIR JOHN MARSHALL, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN INDIA.

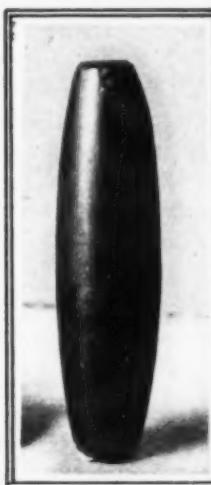


ENGRAVED WITH A PICTOGRAPHIC SCRIPT UNLIKE ANY PREVIOUSLY KNOWN INDIAN ALPHABET, BUT SOMEWHAT RESEMBLING MYCENEAN PICTOGRAPHS: PREHISTORIC SEALS FROM MOHENJO-DARO AND HARAPPA.

BEARING FIGURES OF BULLS AND MYSTERIOUS PICTOGRAPHIC SYMBOLS, SOME RESEMBLING ROMAN NUMERALS: PREHISTORIC INDIAN SEALS FROM HARAPPA AND MOHENJO-DARO WITH AN UNKNOWN FORM OF PICTURE-WRITING.



MADE PERHAPS TO AMUSE LITTLE PREHISTORIC PEOPLE IN THE INDUS VALLEY TWO OR THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO: TERRA-COTTA ANIMALS, BIRDS, AND OTHER TOYS FROM MOHENJO-DARO.



USED WITH A PREHISTORIC MORTAR: A PESTLE OF BLACK HEMMATITE.



PREHISTORIC CREMATION: A FUNERAL URN OF RED GLAZED WARE.

PREHISTORIC INDIAN DECORATIVE ART: MISCELLANEOUS ORNAMENTS OF CONCH SHELL FOR INLAYING, FOUND AT MOHENJO-DARO (WITH A MEASURE INDICATING THE HEIGHT OF THE BIGGEST ONE—2 INCHES).

Of unique and fascinating interest is the discovery of an unknown form of prehistoric Indian picture-writing, which, like the Minoan script found at Knossos in Crete, still awaits interpretation. The new Indian pictographs occur on seals found at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro in the Indus Valley. "The figures engraved on them and the style of the engraving," writes Sir John Marshall (in his article on page 528), "are different from anything of the kind hitherto met with in Indian art. Some of them are of steatite, others of ivory and others of stone and paste. In shape most are square and provided at the back with a boss

pierced with a small hole for suspension. The animals engraved on them are in some instances bulls, in others unicorns, but neither the Indian humped bull nor the water-buffalo occurs among them. As to the strange pictographs which do duty for letters . . . they bear no resemblance whatever to any ancient Indian alphabet known to us, but, on the other hand, they do bear a certain general affinity to pictographs of the Mycenaean age in the Mediterranean area. At Sir John Marshall's suggestion, we give all the photographs of seals, so that there may be a greater chance of any of our expert readers helping to elucidate the script.

**"DISCOVERIES IN INDIA."**—(Continued from page 528.)

the total absence of any iron on either site, as well as from the fact that none of the objects, except the bricks and a few toy terra-cottas, can be paralleled

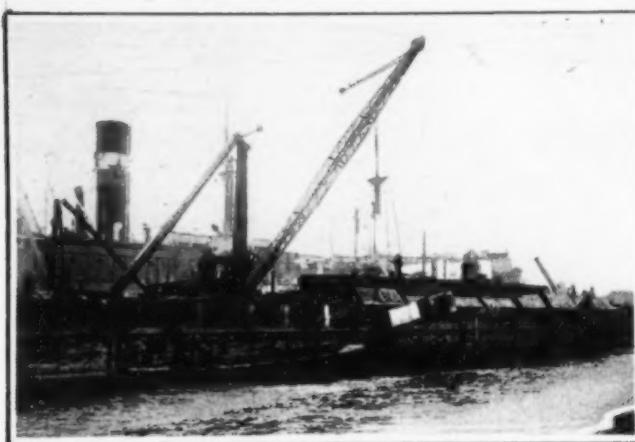
have been found in Baluchistan; and there are linguistic reasons for believing that it was by way of Baluchistan that the Dravidian races (thought by some writers to have been originally connected with the Mediterranean) entered India. Mr. Banerji himself is inclined to connect this culture of the Indus valley directly with the Aegean culture of the Eastern Mediterranean, and holds that distinct affinities are traceable between the Minoan antiquities of Crete, and those unearthed by him at Mohenjo-Daro—especially in regard to the painted ceramic wares and pictographic inscriptions. But the resemblances referred to are, at the best, problematical, and, in any case, too slight and intangible to warrant any inference being drawn as to a cultural connection between the two areas.

What seems *prima facie* more probable is that this forgotten civilisation, of which the excavations of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro have now given us a first glimpse, was developed in the Indus valley itself,

and just as distinctive of that region as the civilisation of the Pharaohs was distinctive of the Nile. In the marvellous forward progress which mankind made during the Neolithic, Copper, and Bronze Ages, the great river tracts of the then inhabited parts of the world played a most important part; for it was in these tracts that conditions were found most favourable for supporting a dense and

settled population—namely, fertility of the soil, an unfailing water supply, and easy communications; and it was, of course, among such large and settled populations that civilisation had the best chance of making progress. The debt which, in the early stages of its development, the human race owed to the Nile, to the Danube, to the Tigris, and to the Euphrates, is already well known. But how much it owed to the Indus and to the Ganges has yet to be determined. In the case of the Indus, it is probably true that successive migrations from outside had a useful effect, as they did in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, in promoting the development of indigenous culture; but there is no reason to assume that the culture of this region was imported from other lands, or that its character was profoundly modified by outside influences.

[The above article by Sir John Marshall is illustrated by four pages of photographs in this number.]



THE LAST OF THE "LION": LORD BEATTY'S JUTLAND FLAG-SHIP REDUCED TO A HULK BY SHIPBREAKERS—A CRANE ON THE MAIN DECK LOWERING A HUGE ARMOUR-PLATE INTO A BARGE.

H.M.S. "Lion," the famous battle-cruiser that was Earl Beatty's flag-ship at the Battle of Jutland, was specifically named in the Washington Treaty among the capital ships to be scrapped. It was thus impossible to preserve her as a national monument, like the "Victory," as was widely urged. The "Lion" was sold to Messrs. Hughes, Bolckow and Co. for £77,000 and taken from Rosyth to Jarrow-on-Tyne to be broken up about six months ago. The ship, which is 680 ft. long, is now but a hulk, and is shortly to go into dry dock to be cut in two. Illustrations of previous stages in her demolition appeared in our issues of April 5, 12 and 26 last.

Photograph by Topical.

among the known antiquities of the Mauryan or subsequent epochs; while the pictographic writing is totally distinct from the early Brahmi script which the Emperor Asoka employed throughout the greater part of India, or from the Kharoshthi script which he used in his inscriptions on the North-Western Frontier.

As to the second question, it is possible, though unlikely, that this civilisation of the Indus valley was an intrusive civilisation emanating from further west. Painted pottery and other objects somewhat analogous to those from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa



REMINISCENT OF THE WAR: THE COLLAPSE OF GLASSFORD BRIDGE OVER THE AVON ON THE MAIN ROAD FROM AYR TO EDINBURGH.

Glassford Bridge, a massive stone structure, which carried the main road from Ayr to Edinburgh over the river Avon, between Strathaven and Stonehouse, in Lanarkshire, suddenly collapsed on the evening of September 9. Fortunately, no one was killed, but some anglers who were fishing under the bridge had a narrow escape. It may be noted that there are three rivers named Avon in Scotland, as well as four in England.

Photograph by C.N.



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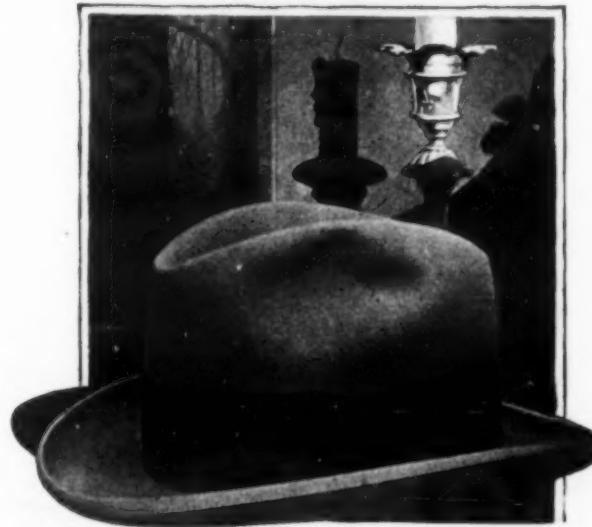
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